Depot Town Rag

Volume 17, Number 8 *"All the news in one block in one month."*

A Publication of the DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

100% FREE
Rag Content
August 1994

- Death Trip III
- *Monster memorabilia*
- Who's painting the town?
- Back doors, decor, gardens, and a 10' killer bee
- **17th Annual Historic Home Tour**

and other strictly local stuff. . . .

Presidents on Mt. Rushmore, Depot Town's Signal Tower, Lighthouse at Alexandria, "Lucy" the Margate Elephant, near Atlantic City, NJ

What this town needs is bigger monuments

Ypsilanti rivals Florence, Italy, when it comes to beautiful towers but, if you're looking for truly gigantic commemorative monuments, we're falling behind. This is the month of the annual Heritage Festival and, as we anticipate more good old fashioned American hucksterism for history, let's also try to focus our creative energies on the possibility of erecting giant icons to the past hoping they'll draw gawkers all year 'round to our fiesty little town - whether we're having a carnival and arts and crafts fair or not.

Past efforts have been noble, if not grand. The monument to our namesake, Greek general Demetrius Ypsilanti, up by the water tower is typical of nineteenth century civic pride. So is the statue of the Civil War soldier across the street - but both are of the size and stature of works found in small town cemeteries. The water tower, itself, reaches gigantic proportions - but it's not really a monument, no matter what those college sophomores print on their t-shirts. The water fountain by the downtown library has been complimented by a memorial to Elija McCoy, (the Real McCoy!) but their scale, too, is exceedingly modest. Depot Town's Signal Tower and old Caboose are sometimes thought to be monuments, but they're really left-overs which have been memorialized. They fit the same category as those old airplanes out at the Yankee Air Force Base at Willow Run Airport.

True monuments have to be really big and pretty silly looking up close so out-of-towners will want to have their pictures taken in front of them just to prove they were there. That's what Ypsilanti needs - something so big it can be seen from the Interstate.

This look at distant and recent history of monstrous memorials is intended to spur *Rag* readers to suggest themes for just such a local monument. Last year's Heritage Fest proposal for an outdoor public sculpture contest fell flat, probably because most of us would rather see one than actually build one. Perhaps we can make things even easier on today's artists and suggest a conceptual approach — let's just *think* about giant art.

What *are* the Seven Wonders of Ypsi? Page five offers some prompts - and there's a nomination form overleaf. Send yours in today and it'll be on the streets before Heritage Fest ends.

Heritage hits the streets in August

Linda Bowen reports an exciting line-up of activities for August 19, 20 & 21:

- **Antique cars** in the lot by Aubree's
- **Michigan-made products** and **arts & crafts**
- **Food vendors** - including Mackinac Island Fudge, plus jugglers & mimes
- **Antiques & Collectibles** on the street and in half of the Freighthouse
- Friday's **Karaoke Night** & Saturday night's **Sock Hop** at the stage near the Sidetrack
- **Kids' Tractor Pull** at 3pm Saturday
- DTA will present a **Heritage Blues Party** Friday & Saturday 6 - midnight, free admission with cash bar.

Is *The Rag* the only paper left in Ypsi?

We were afraid it might come to this: When *The Ypsilanti Press* folded last month, several wags quipped that the eighteen-year-old *Depot Town Rag* was the only newspaper left in Ypsilanti. Not so.

Plenty of papers are left here. *The Rag* is the only one that *originates* here. All the others are out-of-towners that are *left* in the paper boxes around town.

And that's too bad, because a little six-page monthly newsletter certainly isn't a local daily newspaper.

The Ann Arbor News says it can pick up the slack, and they've hyped their staff in the Ladie's Library to fill two floors now. Some are old friends from *The Press*, too.

Maybe we'll see their reporters in the block getting their morning coffee, and perhaps we'll get to know their photographers by the first names - and we're going to try awfully hard to see them as locals.

Give *The News* a chance, though. In the eulogies for *The Press,* most of Detroit's TV stations claimed it was 90 years old. That's television for you; *The Press* grew out of *The Ypsilanti Commerical* which was founded by Henry Coe in 1864. That makes them one hundred and thirty years old.

But give *The News* a chance; they got their start back in 1835, two years before *The Ypsilanti Republican* and nine years before *The Sentinel.* They may be qualified to handle this old district's news after all.

James Thomas Mann's Depot Town Death Trip

from early accounts in *The Ypsilanti Commercial* Part III

24 August 1872

- Cemetery Street Bridge [Prospect, just north of Michigan Avenue]

The men who are working on the Central Road lowering the grade, have for some days been at work under and near where the Cemetery street bridge crosses the railroad. It was supposed, of course, that those in charge of the work knew enough to put new supports under the bridge while digging about the old ones; but it seems they were over-estimated, for the earth was taken away all about the large oak posts of the bridge, leaving nothing but a bank of sand about the width of the posts to sustain the weight of the bridge, the result was, on Wednesday, afternoon, as several men and teams were crossing the bridge (a threshing machine among the rest), this light bank gave way, the supports fell, and the bridge came down with a crash, carrying with it all that were crossing, — men, horses, wagons, machinery, and heavy planks and timbers in one mass of confusion. The crash was heard for blocks around, and men, women and children rushed to the spot, all expecting the sudden death of all on and under the bridge. A kind Providence, however, protected them and those with the teams escaped with a few slight scratches. Under the bridge, before it fell, was boy, named George Smith, sitting in the shade, watching the men at work. He was struck by the falling wreck and very seriously injured. The doctor was called after he had been taken to his father's home, who gave strong hopes of recovery. Four horses went down and were more or less injured, but none killed. When it is remembered that this bridge was over twenty feet high, and became a total wreck, it is wonderful that no more injury was done to the men who fell with it. One man said it was done so quick that the first he knew he was standing on the railroad. The boy who was injured had been told by his mother not to go near the bridge while the men were working there, for he might get hurt. He sat down under the bridge, and behold the consequences.

It is to be hoped that our city offices will see to it that the Railroad company rebuild the bridge without delay, as the residents in that part of the city are put to great inconvenience. The excavations at the Grove Street crossing make that street impassable, and now the destruction of the bridge renders Cemetery Street the same; so that those wishing to get to and from Congress [Michigan] Street must go far out of their way to the bridge on Miles Street.

2 November 1872

- The Central Road - Have been laying the tracks on their new grade during the week. It will take a long time to render it fit for the passage of heavy trains.

- Cemetery Street Bridge - Has been rebuilt and looks substantial enough to bear considerable weight, unless some ignoramus undermines the supports again. A neat foot bridge has been built over the "muddy chasm" at Grove Street crossing.

Seriously maimed or mangled by trains here:

Unidentified man, July 1860
Unidentified man, November 1868
Dr. L.L.Palmer, February 1869
Child hurt under bridge collapse, August 1872
Lieut. Halleck and W.R.Davis, September 1874
George Moore and Miss Matie Hascall, September 1874
Miss Nelly Jones, July 1881
Geo. VanTassel, November 1881
David Ellis, December 1881
Patrick Maroney, January 1882
Mr. Vinton, February 1882
Dr. Owen, April 1882
Wm. H.VanDuesen, June 1883
John McCarty, July 1883
William Bailey, September 1883
Chas. Wallington, November 1883
William Steinbaugh, May 1896
Mr. Scott, May 1896

3 January 1874

- A Smash-up

A freight train coming in Friday morning from the west, met with a catastrophe. A switch this side of the railroad bridge was left open, and the train ran pell-mell into the old freight house, "busting' the engine and doing other damage to the cars.

6 June 1874 - Smash-up

Thursday afternoon, someone left a switch wrong at the north end of the depot. A freight train coming through from the west, the locomotive and eleven cars ran off the track smashed the corner and side of the wood-shed, ruining the plank walk on the east side of the depot, demolished several freight cars and scattered wheat and corn about the premises promiscuously. The round water tank had a narrow escape.

[**Coming in September:** More narrow escapes, sad events and smash-ups. Thanks to J.T. Mann's research, this morbid commentary could go on all year. Let us know when you've had enough. -ed]

A Cooking Encounter

Saturday, August 13 at the Ypsilanti Food Co-op: **Carribean and African Cooking** presented by Howard and Deinse Scheps.

Samples of featured dishes with recipes will be available at the Co-op between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Recipes are vegetarian and dairy free, especially suited for those with a lactose-intolerance. Complete in protein, these dishes are filling and very satisfying.

Co-op orientation is August 13 at noon at 312 N. River Street.

Troll re-appears

Locals weren't surprised when the troll reappeared under the Cross Street Bridge in late May. He hasn't been seen since the 'tridge' was built, but he came back in a blue and purple ten-foot-high form under the old pedestrian bridge just in time for June's jazz. By mid-July he was gone again - and the northern-most pylon is once more the color of concrete!

What are your choices for the "Seven Wonders of Ypsilanti?"

Don't wait until the August elections to make your voice heard. Clip and send the coupon below or stick it in the mail slot of the old caboose. Send your in today --- and you'll see it in the September issue - the last day of Heritage Festival.

Here are my nominations for the Seven Wonders of Ypsilanti:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

(Specially treated paper; no signature necessary)

Send to *The Depot Town Rag*
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Hon's Flowers
46 East Cross
482-2124

Studio 485-2164
Antiques & Interior Accents
19 East Cross Street
Wed 12-5, Fri 12-9, Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5
REMINGTON-WALKER
Design Associates

Teachers Shop
& LEARNING CENTER, LTD.
All materials for Classroom & Curricula
Your K12 CONNECTION
(313) 482-6373
15 E. Cross Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Someone's painting the town - and RR may press charges

Conrail's track inspector, Chris Miranda, was all around the district last month trying to find out who painted the railroad's property at what may be the busiest intersection in town. The tiny Corten steel shack between the new Crossing Guard Tower and the abandoned MCRR depot was painted dark green last month - and nobody seems to know who did it or why. Railroad officials are reasonably upset, since the the structure houses sensitive machinery which can be affected by drastic temperature changes and cause the signals to be defective. Computer chips and heat-sensitive fans may be affected by the dark green paint job, speculate railroad officials. Removing the dark green paint could cost up to $7000, claims Miranda, and they'd like to know where the bill should be sent.

"I talked to City officials, first," said Chris on a recent Saturday morning, "and they suggested 'those folks down in Depot Town' might know something." Amid slurs such as, "They act like they own the place," and other anti-proprietary insults, the un-named City official disclaimed any knowledge of the offense, and quickly passed it down the block.

Not even those folks whose front shop windows face the structure saw anything out of order. "I noticed it was green one day," said River Artworks' Paul Fetters, "but couldn't have told you what color it was before that or how long it had been that color."

Actually, Corten steel is not to be painted in any way - and that's why the railroad installed such a structure. Corten first became recognized in the '60s in the new International Harvester world headquarters and then again in the '70s when UM built its new Art and Architecture building on North Campus. Sealed by the oxidation (rust), the surface was supposed to remain impermeable after installation. UM maintenance officials argued that their example still needed sealing - and have since replaced it.

Still, neighborhood wags wonder who might have taken it upon themselves to go to all the effort to paint someone else's building for them. It was hardly a quality paint job, observed alarmed neighbors. "They even painted over the lock!" said Miranda. Informal investigators suspect a ladder was used - and wonder how anyone could have painted the whole thing all the way to the tip of the roof - without being noticed on that busy corner.

Speculation mounted up and down Cross and River streets last month: Did someone think it better complemented the colors on the Crossing Guard Tower? Was the City warming up to last spring's threat to paint the Thompson Block? Was this the beginning of a new restoration effort on the depot? Did someone just have some left over green paint from a recent project? During that portion of the summer, only O.J. and Kato had a perfect alibi; they were in court.

And so might our local preservationist/ pranksters, say railroad officials who are eager to close this case and preserve safety along this part of their Detroit/Chigago line.

Anyone with information about this questionable historic preservation project can call Conrail's Chris Miranda at 313-297-5564.

Dateline: Depot Town

A Neighborhood Forgotten by Time (and Life and Newsweek)

It's a continuous Frog Island

Sidetrack's Dave French wasn't content to let the spectacular Frog Island Festival pass by one more time without making it a monthly event.

Sunday, July 31 sees Big Dave and the Ultrasonics performing in the Frog Island amphitheater backed up by the Steve Sommers Band with Lady Sunshine and more events planned for the rest of the summer in that venue. If it works out, French hopes to move the series to the Freighthouse for the winter season.

Tickets are available at $5 each from the Sidetrack or downtown's Tap Room.

The 'good old days' are here again.

Blossoms abound

• Thanks to Judy Andrews for her Fourth of July weeding project in the big flower bed at the crossing. Mr. McGregor's garden never looked so good.

• Congratulations to the many merchants who have so artfully planted their tubs along the sidewalks. They're gorgeous this season!

• Honors, also, to those who have planted their flowers in the giant bunkers along the street. Last year's evergreens survived the winter and the addition of the several flowers to those beds is welcome and appreciated.

• Apartment dwellers who miss their yards and gardens can always come down to the street and water, weed or plant the many available beds in Depot Town.

17th Annual Ypsilanti Historic Home Tour

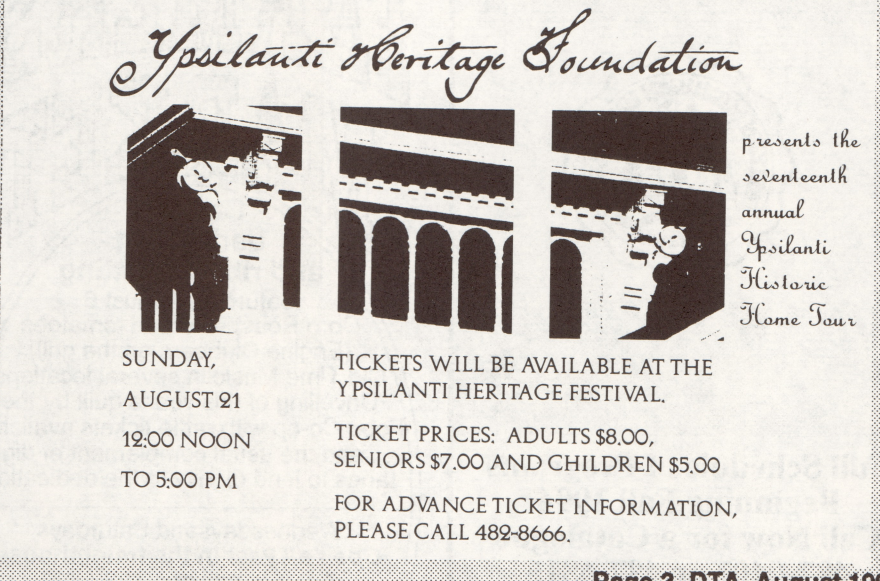
The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation's 17th Annual Historic Home Tour will be held on Sunday, August 21, from 12:00 noon until 5 p.m. during the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival.

This year's tour will feature **six 19th and early 20th century structures**, including the stately **Ballard/Breakey mansion**, an Ypsilanti landmark. Originally built as a simple Federal Style home circa 1834, the Ballard/Breakey mansion was transformed by Arden Ballard into its current, imposing Greek Revival Style between the years 1845-1851. Now completely restored, the mansion has recently opened as The James Breakey Inn, an elegant in-house catering establishment and conference center.

Also featured this year is Ypsilanti's second bed and breakfast establishment, **The Parish House Inn.** Built in 1893, this charming Queen Anne house was originally the parsonage for the First Congregational Church add was moved to its present location in 1987. Now transformed into a stylish bed and breakfast, the Parish House contains nine guest rooms, two parlors and a breakfast room all stunningly decorated in Victorian colors and wallpapers and furnished with period antiques.

Visitors will also be able to tour the baronial **Cornelius Cornwell mansion**, one of Ypsilanti's rare examples of Georgian Revival architecture. Built in 1883, it was reportedly the largest brick residence between Detroit and Chicago. Extensively restored, it now contains 12 imaginatively designed apartments, including a third-floor, multi-level penthouse.

A portion of the proceeds form this year's tour will be donated by the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation to the General Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture Restoration Project. **Tickets** are $8 for adults, $7 for seniors and $5 for children and will be one sale during the Heritage Festival at ticket booths in Riverside Park and in front of the Ypsilanti Historical Museum, located at 220 N. Huron Street. For more information, call 482-8666.


Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation
presents the seventeenth annual Ypsilanti Historic Home Tour
SUNDAY,
AUGUST 21
12:00 NOON
TO 5:00 PM
TICKETS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE YPSILANTI HERITAGE FESTIVAL.
TICKET PRICES: ADULTS $8.00, SENIORS $7.00 AND CHILDREN $5.00
FOR ADVANCE TICKET INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 482-8666.

Growing up in Ypsilanti

- Judy Andrews, *Ypsi Mix*, June 1994

Come visit our newest "work in progress" - The Ypsilanti Botanical Gardens - located directly to the north and south of the Ypsilanti Food Co-op, 312 N. River Street.

The clearing, cleaning, plotting, and planting began this spring with the idea being to showcase some of the herbs and seeds that are available for sale at the Co-op in their natural setting. These are the same herbs and seeds that most of us have probably used at one time or another, whether for medicinal purposes, enhancing our food, deterring insects, making natural beauty products, or just a good summer thirst quencher.

For those who have been around here for a decade or so, you may remember the glorious enclosed water garden that Warren Lewis, a tenant in the Millworks Building, designed and planted. Remnants of that same garden can still be seen and will be incorporated into the Ypsilanti Botanical Gardens. We hope to have it finished by midsummer but, as any avid gardener knows, no garden is every truly finished.

If you have a favorite herb plant or just an extra one growing in your garden that you would like to donate to the endeavor, please bring it to the Co-op with your name and its name in a little pot. We would be happy to have it become part of Ypsi's Botanical Gardens.

Quilting and raffle featured

The Ypsilanti Food Cooperative has, for the 7th year, pulled together a cooperative quilt to raffle during the Heritage Festival in Ypsilanti August 20 - 22. Each the year the quilt's proceeds go to the benefit of the Co-op and each year, through the efforts of many, we bring our community awareness a little closer to the Co-op.

This year's quilt is a nine-patch in periwinkle and muslin, a tradition Amish pattern, The filler is wool from a Pennsylvania Amish sheep farmer in Lancaster County.

"We encourage and invite all to come visit us at the Heritage Festival," says LauraJeanne Kehn, of the Co-op. "We'll also have the ice cold water to quench your thirst from Arbor Springs while you see our quilt."

"Hope to see you there ... August 20-21!"

New decor at Sharon/Ike's

Sharon Finn has redecorated the interior of **Ike's Barbershop** with new wallpaper and trim in light tones of grey. Ike still stops in from time to time to help out the two lady barbers when needed, but his mural of 'up north'. Gone, too, is much of the deer-head and pine panelling feel, but the huge and historic diagonal square beveled mirrors remain.

Sharon's shop may have a more feminine touch today, but it's still a fine haircutting establishment -- for women *or* men!

Edmunds' art at The Grind

A show of Cathy Edmunds' most recent two-dimensional work is mounted on the walls of The Daily Grind for the month of August. A Saturday morning grand opening will be posted in the shop window and all are invited to see the works of this talented Depot Town artist.

Co-op offers Soup-to-Go

The summer's newest inovation at the Ypsi Food Co-op is elegant veggie soups to take out at $1.25. Co-oppers are also looking for "guest soup makers" to contribute their own favorite recipes to the block's newest tradiation.

Another ancient marker

Talk about historic preservation! Look at Steve Kantola; he's 40 years old on August 28! Tie this event in with this year's annual Heritage Festival and mark it on your calendar. A 'happy birthday' to one of the best housepainters in the area.

Strictly local stuff:

August 1994

Depot Towners are invited to participate in any or all of the following activities for the good of this old commercial district:

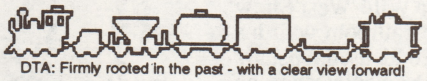
- **Depot Town Association**
  Monthly Meeting
  7:30 p.m., Thursday, 8/18
  The Old Caboose
- **Depot Town Antique Engine Club**
  7:30 pm Thursday , 8/25
  at the Freighthouse Coffeeshop

THE DEPOT TOWN RAG

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc. a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate. -Tom Dodd, editor

The Depot Town Association, Inc.
Judi D. Monaghan, president
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

DTA , 23 June 1994



DTA: Firmly rooted in the past - with a clear view forward!

In the old caboose, again, a week late due to conflicts on the third Thursday

Treasury: $8204.96.

Rag Report: July issue is at the printer. Minutes will be published in August.

Heritage Fest plans for August 19, 20, 21:

- Linda Bowen has been contracted to promote the district with displays of 'upscale manufactured goods and Michigan-made products' from the bridge to the tracks.
- The Depot Town stage will host Heritage Fest events Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 - 6 p.m.
- DTA's Heritage Blues Party will run from 6 - midnight Friday and Saturday only. Jim Lulow will be stage manger and sound technicians may cost $750.00.
- Kevin Hill and Kevin McCormick will manage the bar for DTA and are in need of volunteers. Contact Judy Monaghan (485-4851) or Carolyn McKeever (483-4256) to serve and take tickets.

Caboose: Members of the Depot Town Antique Engine Club are finishing repairs on the north deck.

Cable Ad: Merchants have collected $588.00 for the line item to cover a district-wide commercial. Final shooting will take place week. About thirty merchants are involved.

Farmers' Market Advisory: No report.

Landscape Maintenance needed around the Signal Tower. A proposal has been made to the DDA.

Additional Parking: Conrail still owns the lot between the depot and Michigan Ladder Co. and the space is not available for legal parking.

New Business:

- Save Our Township Committee wants to show their video tape to DTA.
- Neeta Delaney proposes EMU's September 6th Freshman Day and later Parents Day to feature coupons from merchants with DTA endorsement.
- March of Dimes "Buttons for Blue Jeans" September 20-21: Depot Town merchants are considering offer coupons or values to anyone wearing the button.

Best Yet award: To First of America for the ATM.

The Golden Goose award: To those who ride bikes on the sidewalks! Please keep all vehicles in the streets; sidewalks are reserved for pedestrians, only!

La Leche League of Ypsilanti presents

World Walk for Breast Feeding

9 - 11 A.M. Saturday, August 6

Beginning in Frog Island Park and continuing to Riverside Park.

Sponsors and pledges please contact Gloria Wilson: 697-2924.

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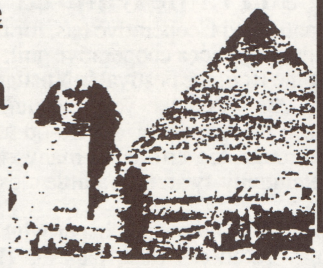
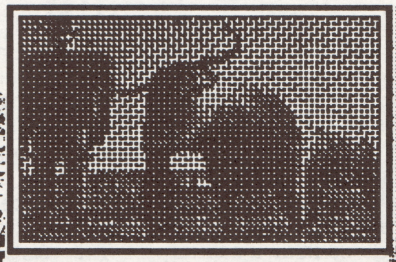
John Barr
FOR DISTRICT JUDGE

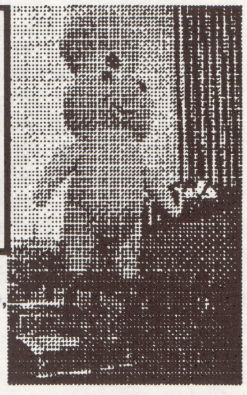
Paid for by John Barr for Judge Committee
Paulette Miller, C.P.A.
Treasurer

Some historical background in the style of our own Heritage Fest:

Monster memorabilia remembered down in Depot Town







Left to right: Sphinx, Paul & Babe, Pillsbury Doughboy. Below: Colossus of Rhodes.

The Seven Wonders of Antiquity had nothing to do with old houses in Ypsilanti. The Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops), the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Statue of Zeus at Olympia, the Temple of Diana (or Artemis) at Ephesus, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes, and the Pharos (or Lighthouse) of Alexandria were certainly colossal, but only Cheops remains today. (Just try and knock over a pyramid!)

The Middle Ages described still more wonders: The Colosseum of Rome, the Catacombs of Alexandria, the Great Wall of China, Stonehenge, the Porcelain Tower (or Pagoda) of Nanking, the Learning Tower of Pisa, and Hagia Sophia, most of which continue to rival today's Ypsilanti Visitors & Convention Bureau hype.

In the late eighteenth century, attention was given to the Seven *Natural* Wonders of the World: The Grand Canyon, Rio de Janeiro harbor, Iguassu Falls, Yosemite Valley and the Giant Sequoias of California (tied for fourth!), Mt. Everest, the Nile River, and the Northern Lights! Chambers of Commerce across the U.S. updated that list to include Carlsbad Caverns, the Falls of Yellowstone, Petrified Forest and Bandlands of Arizona, Crater Lake and Wizard Island, Oregon and Rainbow Natural Bridge in Utah, throwing out all the foreign competition.

Schoolkids' encyclopediae now mark the Seven Wonders of *Today*: the Great Pyramid, Hagia Sophia, and the Learning Tower still qualify, but add the Taj Mahal, the Washington Monument, the Eiffel Tower and the Empire State Builidng. Obviously, it's time for another update. Then you can get into the Seven Wonders of *Transportation*, the Seven Wonders of *Communication*, the Seven Wonders of *Science* and the Seven Wonders of *American Engineering*.

Why seven? This question naturally arises among readers less conditioned to number symbolism than the society of Hellenistic Alexandria. Pythagoras, sixth century B.C., had maintained that the number seven belonged to sacred things. The number is prominent in early Chinese symbolism. It features prominently in the philosophy, mysticism, and art of Greek, Hebraic, and Christian founders of Western Civilization: Seven Wise Men of Greece, the Seven Sages of Rome, the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, the Seven Champions of Chistendom, the seven seas, ad infinitum. Even Shakespeare distinguished the seven ages of man.

What are the Seven Wonders of Ypsi that people would come to see if we promoted them hysterically enough?

Make your nominations with the coupon on page two. Be sure to include *all* seven. You'll see them here next month.

World's Fairs and Expositions have made history, themselves, with historical hoopla that have surpassed even Ypsilanti's Heritage Festival commemorations.

Local history does not show the P.T. Barnum Circus on Frog Island, but his style would certainly complement recent hysteria for historical hyperbole in Our Town. We're pretty good at it, ourselves, and last month's circus proved it again.

The Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 brought out many romantics mourning the loss of the frontier. The Expo featured a huge Moose Bridge with plaster mooses rampant, and the Fair's centerpiece was *The Republic*, which deliberately rivaled the Sphinx and the Colossus of Rhodes in scale and pomp. At that same event, Buffalo Bill Cody had reduced the Chinese Theater, the Lapland Encampment and the mounted Wild East Bedouins to the status of minor side-show attractions on the Midway Plaisance. Buffalo Bill's enormously popular Wild West Show came to the Follett House ballroom with his "Old Glory Blowout," a condensed, upstairs version of the kind of embryhonic rodeo he had introduced in Nebraska in 1882.

Frederic Remington's colossal cowboys at the St. Lous Fair in 1904 (*Cowboys Shooting Up a Western Town, Off the Trail*, or *Comin' through the Rye*) can be seen in a somewhat smaller but still noble version on display at the Olde Towne Coin & Gold shop.

In the folk styles given to Mike Fink, Davy Crockett and sometimes even Teddy Roosevelt, Minnesotans have been quick to eulogize Paul Bunyan in giant effigies, totems, and exotic paraphernalia. Ypsilanti kids have often hinted that Paul was buried near the Campus in an excited state, but Kelliher, Minnesota claims his gravesite with a mound and plaque stating "Paul Bunyan, 1794 to 1899. Here lies Paul, and that's all."

Minnesota shows the way: Towns smaller and less stuffy than Ypsilanti have capitalized on their dorky uniquenesses over the year. All across 1930's Minnesota were strewn Paul Bunyan artifacts. Hyperbolic foul dominate Rothsay, Vergas, Pelican Rapids, Virgina and Wheaton, Minnesota. Fish predominate in Nevis, Baudette, Ray, Erskine, Bena and Garrison, Minnesota. There's a giant Holstein cow in Bongards; deer in Deerwood and Starbuck; the Dala horse in Mora; Smokey the Bear in International Falls; the giant ear of corn in Olivia; the Jolly Green Giant in Blue Earth; "Big Ole, the Viking" in Alexandria; St. Urho in Menahga; an early and exceedingly serious "Hermann the German" in New Ulm; and a clutch of voyageurs and Indians scattered across the state from Thief River Falls to Crane Lake. If Minnesotans can decorate their drab prairie with kitch, what's standing in the way of Ypsilanti?

Modern World Icons - All modern heroic art does not have to be sculpted out of butter. We have some modest local examples: The UniRoyal tire on the way to Detroit (undergoing a re-tread and new hubcaps soon!), the spherical fuel storage tank in Melvindale painted to look like a Tiger baseball, the fiberglass cow above the milk depot on Ecorse Road, the giant jungle animals on the Putt Putt golf course on Washtenaw Avenue, even those whirling and smiling Big Boys in front of the local restaurant chain outlets. Tom Monaghan's giant model of the Leaning Tower of Pizza in front of his Pizza Farm world headquarters qualifies as one of today's wonders of bad taste and giganticism. We need more stuff like that right here in Ypsi.

The Future for Big History: A perfect concept to memorialize in Ypsilanti, Michigan, is one which commemorates the Huron River, the Old Sauk Trail, Michigan Avenue, the Michigan Central Railroad, Willow Run Airport, Interstate 94, and the Information Highway - all conduits of transportation and trade; sort of a *Collosus of Roads*. Regular readers are encouraged to make drawings and models of their proposals and exhibit them around the grounds at this month's Heritage Festival. As long as they will pass for Art and are somewhat Historical, who would complain? They could easily be sandwiched in between the Historical Sun Glasses booth and the display of Wind Chimes of Antiquity. Stick them anywere, but keep the first proposals small. Scale models should not interfere with traffic patterns, fire lanes or air rights.

Bulletin: The town of Hidalgo, Texas, in 1992, spent $17,850 to erect a 10-foot statue of a killer bee.

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A Depot Town SAMPLER

Back doors signify good business

Not too long ago it was difficult to get customers to enter the front doors down by the depot, but all that's changed today. Many successful businesses in Depot Town now call as much attention to their rear facade as to their front.

- **Richard Reid's Hair Station** enjoys a small parking lot for customers, an awning (shared by River Artworks), and a rear entrance for customers.
- **Cady's Grill** gets plenty of customers from its rear parking lot with the entry coming in from the south side and they alternate their front entrys -- sometimes from the Old Town Café side; sometimes from Cady's side.
- **The Daily Grind** seems to get as many walk-ins from the Market Plaza as from Cross Street. On Saturdays and Wednesdays they take full advantage of the back-and-forth traffic from the Farmers' Market.
- **Serenity House** gets more of its members up their back stairs than from their more formal entry down on Cross Street.
- Although **Remington/Walker** uses their fancy Market-side door only for deliveries, they enjoy a full three sides of their property for the lovely and creative display windows.

Many businesses on the block still use back doors for delivery - and most of these nineteenth century commerical buildings originally had carriage- or barn-size doors at the rear. Some are still in use, while most have been modified. A careful inspection of the bricks in the back still reveals clues to the original back door designs for this back-street district.

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